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To: You know who you are

Your islands will one day, again, be our mountains. You have, once again, humiliated us. You have, once again, slapped us in the face. You have, once again, provoked us.

Once again, we have to reply. More and more our options are whittled down. You know that.

You know what you are doing. That is why I am confused.

I try to say but I don't know if anyone is listening. You have gone too far; that is why you have to keep going. You have to save face. In order to save face, you are destroying us.

What do we do? What do you expect us to do? Let you walk all over us. I don't think you are that dumb.

Our options are being whittled down. You know that.

How do you expect us to react? How do you want us to react? I think you know. That is what's scary about it.

You know who you are.

You have started on the road to colonialism. It wasn't that long ago. Even I remem-

ber...

It is the wild west once again. Instead of the Iron railroad, it is the fire-string that snakes along the land. When you put up that fire-string that is when we started to choke.

You have choked our rivers without remorse. In fact, you were arrogant about it. You bragged.

You bragged you can reverse rivers with the flick of a switch. You bragged you can level mountains with the flick of a switch. You bragged that the land is now yours.

Now you have decided to name your islands, our mountains, to celebrate your cultural contributors.

Shame on you. You are dancing on the graves of our ancestors. There are better ways to celebrate your culture without stealing someone else's.

Let us talk about rapprochement. When will we see it? When will we feel it? I believe we will feel it when your islands will again be our mountains.

(Please see page 10. -Ed.)

by Ernest Webb

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COVER PHOTO:

Louis Mianscum, Winner of the
Nemaska Fitness Challenge

Photo: Neil Diamond

Cover design: Katerina Cizek



Near legend Erland Campbell hanging with the living Legend George Jones.

For the record and just so I don't get asked years from now where I was when I heard about the death of Princess Diana, I'll have you know I was at Roger's Four In One eatery in Nemaska covering the Fitness Challenge. Read all about it on pages 12 through 16.

Sadly, that might be this generation's "Where Were You When?" question. Not as heavy as the Kennedy assassination but we'll take whatever we can get.

I don't know about the rest of you but I caught a whiff of a conspiracy as soon as I got more details. I bet the "Bitch Queen" had her off'ed. She hated Diana and is probably celebrating as we speak. Those people are evil. They have the blood of millions on their hands and built their now-gone empire killing and stealing from us. So they wouldn't bat a royal eyelash if they were to turn on their own. Especially one who stole the spotlight and dared to act human.

There are other theories flying around. There's the one which has the designers of her many outfits having her whacked so the value of their creations would skyrocket.

Then there's the Muslim connection. It says that the British Secret Service, MI-5, wanted Dodi out of the way. If he were to have sired a child with Diana that would have given the future King of England a Muslim half-brother. Lord forbid!

Howard Stern holds the theory that it was, of course, the Jews, who feared a Muslim-connected monarchy.

Another theory says that she faked her own death because she hated the glare of constant scrutiny. Just like Elvis, Jim Morrison, Jesus and Marilyn.

There are a host of other possible murderers. The IRA, Aliens, Camilla Parker-Bowles, a drunk limousine driver, the French because they're still pissed off about events that occurred hundreds of years ago, Fleet Street so they can sell more papers, Hydro-Quebec, so the Cree would be distracted from Great Whale. The Pope still pissed off at Henry VIII.

The SQ probably suspect the Mohawks. The Mohawks, the SQ. Montreal blames Toronto and vice versa. If they're still around, the Hatfields probably blame the McCoys.

Erland Campbell was philosophical about the tragedy. He says if Charles hadn't picked her to produce his heirs, Diana would still be with us.

"I'm devastated by it. I'm going to have my little moment for sure," says the as-yet-hitless wonder.

The awful truth might just be that it was her driver losing control of the speeding vehicle trying to get away from the photographers trying for images of people we want to see. A film maker who did a story on the paparazzi said it is us who are to blame the death. We are the ones who buy the papers, magazine and books these photographs appear in.

We always find it easier to blame the photographers.

by Ndiamon

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PAYABLE TO BEESUM COMMUNICATIONS

Cree connection in Davis Inlet scandal

When allegations of bribes forced Katie Rich to resign as chief of Davis Inlet, most Innu knew there was a Cree connection. But few people in the Cree world know what happened.

How did a Cree company find itself in the middle of a scandal that has divided Davis Inlet for the last year, forced a chief to resign and got her investigated by the Mounties?

BY ALEX ROSLIN

NOVEMBER 13, 1996, WAS A BIG DAY in Davis Inlet. The big-wigs were flying in. The community was holding a great celebration.

Thirty years of waiting were at an end for the Innu community on the rocky Labrador coast. The Innu would be signing a historical agreement with the feds to relocate Davis Inlet, also known as Mushuau. The community would get \$82 million to move from a remote island to the mainland where better community services were promised.

For the Innu, it was the biggest project in the history of the community, a chance to design a new home, a way to heal, to create jobs and gain valuable skills.

Outside businesses also saw it as a golden opportunity. And none more than Cree Construction. Projects were drying up in Northern Quebec and Cree Construction already had experience designing and relocating Cree communities. As a Native-owned company, it had a good chance of getting the contract.

Just to be sure, Steven Bearskin, president of Cree Construction, got on the plane to Mushuau along

with Chief Billy Diamond to talk face-to-face with the Innu. With them went a high-powered team of business leaders from Quebec and Newfoundland who also wanted a piece of the action.

The group met with the Innu and presented their proposals. The Innu were invited to visit the Cree communities for themselves to see Cree Construction's work. Everyone shook hands and went home.

It looked good for Cree Construction. Or so thought Steven Bearskin. Then, everything went wrong.

Rumours of bribe attempts started flying around the community. Katie Rich was forced to resign as chief of Mushuau. The RCMP launched a criminal investigation. The rumours about bribes even reached the ears of Indian Affairs Minister Ron Irwin.

Cree Construction never did get any contracts from Davis Inlet. Some residents still hold a grudge saying the company was too aggressive, too pushy and too greedy.

What went so horribly wrong? How could Cree Construction lose out on such a lucrative and needed contract, one that seemed tailor-made for its expertise? A contract this size doesn't come along every day.

How could it slip through Cree Construction's fingers? How many potential jobs did Crees lose?

It was a beautiful day when the agreement with the feds was signed last November. Everybody in

this community of 550 was feeling good, and no wonder. Davis had experienced more than its share of hardship. After some kids were shown on the news sniffing gasoline, the community became a symbol for

the struggle which Native people face in Canada. Now, for a change, something positive would be happening with the relocation.

Brad Morse, chief of staff to Minister Irwin, was at the ceremony in Davis Inlet.

"That's a community that's gone through hell," he said. "You had the high of finally reaching an agreement, a monumental historical achievement, something the community worked on for 30 years. You have this great rush of joy. The whole community was just high as a kite. Just a wonderful day," said Morse, who is now a professor of law at Ottawa University.

Morse adds, "Sometimes when we get



Steven Bearskin's trip started the rumours flying.

that big a high you get hit and you feel like you've been punched in the stomach. It just knocks the wind right out of you."

So it came to pass with

Katie Rich. Hit hard by the rumours of a possible bribe, she resigned as chief just weeks after the signing ceremony. Close to a year later, Mushuau is still deeply divided over the resignation, the rumours and the trip that got the whole scandal started.

The \$2,500 question

The rumours started when Rich cashed a cheque for \$2,500 at the local store. The cheque was from the Waskaganish band. Rich got the cheque as an honorarium for going to Waskaganish to make a speech at the local Annual General Assembly. But many residents of Mushuau saw it as a possible bribe. Rich was accused of taking a payoff from the Crees for the contract.

The suspicions got worse when Cree Construction started going around saying it had the relocation contract in the bag. The Innu negotiators who were actually meeting with the feds say they couldn't believe it. The \$82 million wasn't even officially announced. Also, the feds had made it clear that public tenders would be required for all the contracts. Companies would have to make a bid and the best bid would be chosen. No one was getting any favours or an inside track.

The Innu negotiators wanted to know if

continued on page 6

continued from page 5

the chief had made any promises. "We didn't know what was going on," said Joseph Mark-Rich, one of the Innu negotiators. "People heard Cree Construction had won the whole contract and we as a committee never heard of that. That took us by surprise," he said.

"We told her (Rich) to lay off, not to do anything."

As Ron Irwin's right-hand man, Brad Morse got drawn into the affair, too. He got a call one day from lawyer Bill Grodinsky, who has worked for the Crees. Grodinsky asked for an urgent meeting to discuss the contract in Davis Inlet.

Morse said he was "surprised" during the meeting when Grodinsky and Steven Bearskin started talking as if the contract was a sure thing for Cree Construction. They believed they wouldn't even have to make a bid, he said. "They gave me a bit of an impression that it was all a done deal from their perspective, if you will.

"And I was clear with them that the agreement that was likely to be reached at that stage would require a bidding process, through public tender. I think that came to be a bit of a surprise to them."



Billy Diamond: Was he going too fast for the Innu?

The Innu have another complaint about the trip by the Cree business group. The businessmen were seen by some Innu as acting too aggressively and not taking into account Innu concerns.

"They were very pushy," said John Mark-Rich, who is also the associate project manager of the Mushuau Innu Relocation Corp. "They were trying to get the whole relocation project. We wanted to be involved in the relocation, not asking a company to come in and take over the whole thing. They wanted the whole thing."

Mushuau Band Council member Katejun Rich agreed. "There are no bad feelings toward the Crees, but I'm not sure about Billy Diamond. There might be toward him. He was pushing very hard to get the contract. He was going full speed. He was going too fast for us. We want to make sure people from here get the benefits," said Kajetan Rich, whose other hat is director-general of the Mushuau Innu Relocation Corp.

Family squabble

Steven Bearskin said the Cree business delegation was proposing a partnership with the Innu to do the relocation. He said nothing out of the ordinary happened during the visit, just business as usual. No one was being pushy, there was nothing inappropriate and definitely no bribes.

"I don't feel it was aggressive at all. All we did was visit the community and we acted accordingly. We had a proposal to make to them and that's what we did."

Bearskin said the bribe allegations against Katie Rich were based on a "family squabble" within Mushuau.

"As chief, she didn't hire a family member for a job and it turned out they started pointing fingers at her and basically accused her of being on the take, taking kickbacks, that type of thing," said Bearskin.

"What it was of course is she had received a fee from one of the Cree communities as a keynote speaker at one of the general assemblies, and that's how that rumour got started."

One of the businessmen who went along with the Crees also denied knowing of any bribes. He said he can't imagine how the Innu got a bad impression of the visit.

Bob Watts was in Mushuau representing Quebec engineering giant SNC-Lavalin, which also wanted a slice of the contract. Last spring, Watts was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs.

"There were certainly no bribes made to anyone in my presence," Watts said.

"The thing I personally find kind of disturbing about the whole thing is it makes no sense why anyone would risk the idea of a trip to Waskaganish, which would have cost a couple of thousand dollars, for a pretty huge contract. If anyone was ever going to offer a bribe—I mean that's not a bribe as far as I'm concerned. I can't imagine how it would be in anybody's mind."

He also denied that anyone in his group was being pushy, saying he believed the presentation was "kind of low-key."

Chief Diamond did not return several phone calls.

Everyone thought I was being bribed: Katie Rich

Katie Rich herself has moved on to bigger things since resigning. She was later elected as Grand Chief of the Innu Nation, the regional Innu government. In an interview, she insisted that the \$2,500 was an honorarium and nothing else.

"Since the Crees gave honorariums to

their special guests and of course I was given one, everyone thought I was being bribed. The same people who were talking about it are the ones who created companies and wanted a share of the contracts," she said.

But Rich had some criticisms of the Cree visit, too: "People talk about why is everybody coming to see Davis. They didn't bother with us a few years ago, and now that we have this money everybody wants to be our friend. Which I can understand because they're just like vultures."

Rich also had doubts about one of the businessmen who came with the Crees—a certain Tom Hickman. Hickman, a St. John's construction tycoon, is well-known in Newfoundland after a marathon, seven-month trial on fraud charges which entered the history books as the longest trial ever at Newfoundland Supreme Court in the history of St. John's. In 1993, Hickman was sentenced to 12 months in jail and fined \$100,000. Another reason Rich and other Innu were concerned.

Bearskin said he knew all along that Tom Hickman had been in jail, but it didn't bother him. Hickman had paid his debt to society. "He told me that story, of course," said Bearskin. "Right up front, right at the very beginning."

Did he have a problem with it? "No, not at all," Bearskin replied. "I don't hold anything against anybody after they've paid they debt to society. I told him even the Innu people go to jail on their principles."

What really happened behind closed doors in Mushuau may never be known. RCMP Inspector Gus Macintosh, head of the St. John's Commercial Crimes Unit, said the police investigation continues. He wouldn't provide any details except to say that it concerns "possible irregularities."

But what may have left a more lasting impression is the feeling of some Innu that a group of fellow Natives were too greedy, too pushy while guests in the community.

That feeling could hurt Cree Construction if it ever returns to make a bid. It didn't get the whole contract as it had proposed. A first wave of small contracts for preliminary work has been given out and none of these went to Cree Construction either. The bigger contracts are still coming up, and Steven Bearskin said Cree Construction said he still wants to bid for some of them.

Band Councillor Kajetan Rich said Cree Construction is welcome to bid. But other Innu still have a bad taste in their mouths and say the Cree company won't be considered. As the story and rumours spread in Indian Country and beyond, how many other contracts could be lost is uncertain.



At the George Jones Show.

QUEBEC: ROI DE ACID RAIN

Quebec is one of the world's worst culprits for acid rain, says a United Nations agency that is monitoring the problem.

A world-wide campaign to reduce acid rain is helping clean up Europe, but much of Canada and the U.S. hasn't shown any progress and the pollution is getting worse in some places.

There was no reduction in acid rain in Quebec, the Adirondacks in the U.S. North-East, parts of the U.S. Mid-West and Britain. In these areas, acidity in rivers and lakes is stable or rising, even though acid rain has been reduced by half around the world since 1990.

Acid rain is caused by industrial pollution and increases the acidity of water, killing fish and plant life. Entire lakes in Quebec are dead because of the pollution.

LASAGNA VINDICATED

Seven years after the Oka Crisis, three officers of the Surete du Quebec were found guilty of using excessive force in the arrest of Ronald "Lasagna" Cross of Kahnawake.

As the protesters emerged from behind the barricades at Oka, police grabbed Cross and took him to a tent where they severely beat him, said the Quebec Police Ethics Committee.

The committee said officer André Turcotte was "clearly abusive, excessive and wrong."

Later, two other agents escorted

Cross in a police vehicle to SQ headquarters in Montreal. The committee said that once in the car, officer Lucien Landry turned and hit Cross. Landry is one of the four officers charged with planting evidence on a suspected drug dealer in the so-called Matticks Affair. (Landry was acquitted.)

But the ethics committee did not accept all of Cross's allegations. It dismissed his claim that he was beaten for an hour during the trip to Montreal and later on in SQ headquarters. He said he was hit on the head, ears and along his torso, and once in Montreal received blows to his side, stomach, back and genitals.

VICTORY CELEBRATED OVER VOISEY MINE

The Innu and Inuit have achieved a victory as big as the famous Cree court victory over Hydro-Quebec in 1973. After a six-day protest at Voisey's Bay, the Newfoundland Court of Appeal has stopped work on a massive nickel mine near Innu and Inuit burial grounds.

The victory came after almost 300 Innu and Inuit descended on the project and put up a camp to block bulldozers. They said they wouldn't leave until Inco Ltd. addressed their concerns. They want an environmental assessment of the project and compensation.

The protesters cheered and hugged when word of the judge's decision reached them. "We'll be celebrating tonight," said Geoffrey Pastashi of Sheshatshiu. "We'll probably form circles and dance around the camp."

Mervin Andersen of the Labrador Inuit

Association seemed stunned. "We're so happy we can't stop smiling. To be honest, we weren't expecting this."

Three judges agreed that the Inuit should be granted an injunction stopping Inco's work. The injunction will suspend construction until an appeal can be heard of an earlier court decision that paved the way for the company to begin building a temporary road and airstrip.

"We have concluded that the failure to grant relief will cause irreparable harm to the applicants and to the people they represent," said Justice William Marshall.

The appeal will decide whether another judge was correct in exempting the construction from review by a joint environmental-assessment panel that has Aboriginal representation. The judge agreed with Inco's argument that the construction is related to exploration work, and so does not have to be reviewed.

Marshall said the case illustrates the classic problem of how industrial society can conflict with the concerns of those who want to enjoy their traditional way of life in a clean and healthy environment.

COKE PLOT FOILED

Four men were arrested in Iqaluit on charges of conspiracy to import cocaine from Columbia. Police seized 107 grams of cocaine in the community and also charged one of the men with possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking.

Police said a group of Iqaluit men was buying coke in Columbia, where it costs as little as \$10 a gram. One of the men acted as a mule to bring the coke into Iqaluit, where it is sold for \$200/gram.

"They travelled through the normal passenger airline routes and couriered the narcotics into Iqaluit," said the police.

Those arrested were: Adam Pitts, 24, Jay Wisintainer, 29, Grant Liddiard, 47, and Shahin Paydar, 30.

-Source: Nunatsiq News

BEST OF JAMES BAY!!!

WARNING, WARNING: This is your last chance to get your entries in for the Best of James Bay 96 Contest. I repeat, this is YOUR LAST CHANCE. Do not delay. Please complete the form in those old copies of The Nation you have lovingly collected over the years. Fax: (514) 278-9914. Draw: Two tickets on Air Creebec. Deadline: Sept. 15. Akuuda.



2nd Annual Cree First Nation Fitness Challenge

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on Saturday, August 30 in Nemaska, Quebec

Well folks, we as a community with the support of our incoming visitors pulled it off once again. We should be proud of ourselves. Thank you, to everyone for being so instrumental and for doing so much to make this a tremendous success. Thanks for your enthusiasm, energy and excitement. A huge thank you goes out to all the athletes who came and participated in this year's Challenge. Let's keep it alive and growing. It is a good thing. Meequetch!

RESULTS

WOMEN

Stephanie Mianscum 1st place 1:55:56 Mistissini \$2500.00
Lizzia-Anne Mettaweskum 2nd place 2:31:17 Nemaska \$1500.00
Linda Iserhoff-Cooper 3rd place 3:08:22 Waswanipi \$1000.00
plus trophies and medals

MEN

Louis Mianscum 1st place 2:14:26 Mistissini \$2600.00
Redfern Cheezo 2nd place 2:15:46 Nemaska \$2200.00
Jimmy Coonishish 3rd place 2:18:50 Mistissini \$1700.00
Malcolm Tanoush 4th place 2:35:48 Nemaska \$1000.00
Roderick Petawabano 5th place 2:50:35 Nemaska \$600.00
Jodie House 6th place 5:23:00 Chisasibi
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Bewildered

Letter to *The Nation*:

I woke up this morning and started to read the article by "The brainless and self-important few" before going to work and I was bewildered, as well as discomfited, by the superior and murmuring attitude of some of our people. Everyone is entitled to their opinion and do have the right to express them. However, I ask myself: Why won't these people who write articles such as these identify themselves? Do they really want to help their people and try to get the full support they need? Or are they just never satisfied enough to try to understand "actions speak louder than words"? I enjoyed articles written and signed by those who have had something to share and/or establish. Their courage was admirable because they were not afraid to reveal themselves.

I am a resident from Waswanipi and I am in the midst of what seemingly appears to be a secret antagonism and/or aversion against any or all local governments. Sometimes I, also, feel that your magazine is assisting in the stirring of divergence and discord in the Cree Nation. We seem to enjoy printing disputes and contentions between Cree members, as well as Cree and non-Cree members. I know this ugly truth is out there but do we need to continually serve it, feed on it and digest it? Pretty soon, We'll get sick because I am starting to.

We, all, know how we need to work together and to be honest with each other, as well as to be respectful and courteous to one another. Can we be more positive and constructive in trying to support "just causes"? We won't be heard if we do not speak up when opportunity rises and when we don't provide concrete solutions.

Even as I convey this thought, I cannot express how sad I feel at the self-pity, low self-esteem and inferior attitude which appears to be yet instilled in many of our people. There was, also, that understanding that some would label some well-meant endeavours as not correct unless done in their way.

I know that many will not agree with me and I would appreciate that such persons address their concern to me and not to be plastered as a parodying article for the ignorant and discontent individuals. I say ignorant and discontent individuals, because there are some who deliberately mean for cruelty, while forgetting

some of our most sensitive and important morals and values towards one another. I am for unity and that this should be our objective if we are to be successful as one nation.

As for those who choose to rebel, revolt and reject any/all means of solutions, how can we help you if you persist to refuse that which is meant for the good and well-being for all of us? A start is not an end but a process which continually needs changes as it proceeds.

Please accept this as a constructive and well-meant disclosure. Thank you.

**Allen L. Cooper
Waswanipi**

Editor's Note: The author is the Housing Administrator of the Waswanipi Cree First Nation.

Preventing AIDS

Letter to *The Nation*:

I want to thank Will Nicholls for sharing with the readers of *The Nation* his and his girlfriend's experiences regarding their decision to enter a serious monogamous relationship and to undertake a confidential HIV test (*The Nation*, August 29, 1997). As a Public Health and Family Physician for Iiyuuschii, one of my objectives is to prevent HIV infection. But the advice I give through the clinic, through the radio and through posters will never be as effective as the testimony of someone who himself has made the decision to avoid AIDS. Thanks to your editorial, several people have approached me at the clinic and in the streets with questions about HIV infection.

The rate of Chlamydia, a Sexually Transmitted Disease like HIV, is 10 times greater in Iiyuuschii than in the rest of Quebec. This means that many people are transmitting a sexual infection by sleeping with more than one partner, without using a condom. Chlamydia, like Gonorrhea, can cause infertility and chronic pain in women. But, if caught in time, it can be cured with a pill or an injection. But, suppose that HIV entered that same chain. A large number of members of our communities would be infected with the HIV virus within a short time. And most of them would develop AIDS. Like you correctly point out, HIV is a lifetime infection with multiple complications that leads to a premature death.

What if someone becomes infected with HIV? You rightly point out "the shame" that people will make them feel. But we must change our attitude toward people infected with HIV. They are

victims of a worldwide epidemic which affects all races, all social classes, all sexual orientations. There is some hope. It may no longer be a "death warrant," as new triple therapy delays the onset of the complications of AIDS for many years. If we meet someone living with HIV infection, we can treat him like any other person, optimistic that our friendship could last for many, many years. You are right when you say that having a child may no longer be an option for someone infected with HIV, since there is a 20-percent risk of transmitting the infection to the baby.

Finally, you encourage us to make confidential HIV testing and condoms easily available for all Crees. The good news is that the clinics in every village have exactly the same system for confidential HIV testing that you experienced in Montreal. Any person can enter the clinic in all of the communities and ask to see the nurse. Nobody will know why you went to see the nurse. (It could be for a headache, for athlete's foot or for a medical exam required by work...) When you tell the nurse or the doctor that you want a confidential HIV test, he or she will take out a folder with a number. This folder contains information for you and guides the pre- and post-test counseling. Your name will never be written down and nothing about this visit will be written in your chart. After the nurse or doctor takes your blood, he or she will give you a number in a card. The clinic will receive the result of the test with this number, without knowing to whom it belongs. After one month, you return to the same nurse or doctor and show your number. He or she will find the result and give it to you, along with the post-test counseling. If you decide you do not want to get your result, do not show up to the clinic. Nobody will call you, because nobody knows what your number is, except you.

Condoms are available for free at the clinics and at a few other places. Last week, two 15-year-old young men came to the clinic to ask me for condoms. But that took some courage. I would appreciate the ideas of your readers on how to make condoms more easily available to all. Condoms work, but as you say, a monogamous relationship (only one sexual partner) is the best protection. And frankly, it makes life a whole lot less complicated. One-on-one is in. Three is a (risky) crowd.

**Robert Harris, MD. MPH..
Chisasibi**

Defining our world



It is said that a society defines its world by giving names to the things within its world. Iyiyuuch are no different. Everywhere one goes there are names for a particular piece of land or water. As Iyiyuschii came into being so too did the names.

The Quebec government has proposed the renaming of a 101 islands in the Caniapiscau reservoir in honour of 101 Quebecois writers on the anniversary of Bill 101.

Samuel and Margaret Bearskin are Cree culture teachers from Chisasibi. They have been teachers for 20 years. Before that they lived off the land as their ancestors had done. Their hunting area is in and around the Caniapiscau reservoir. I called them to see what they thought about the renaming of the mountains that are above the water line.

Interview and translation by Ernest Webb

Tell me a little about where you went hunting. Is it by Caniapiscau?

Margaret: Yes, that is where our parents hunted. We used to

leave from Chisasibi, when we were still at the island. When we were still in school our parents used to go hunting. School started by the 15th of August and our parents used to be gone by then. Whoever had parents going inland would stay in the residence to wait for school to start. Then school would be finished by June 15 but the people inland generally didn't arrive by then. They were far inland they had to wait for summer to arrive. It takes awhile for summer to arrive inland. They paddled from afar. Then it was time for me to go hunting and I went hunting where my parents went. That is where we went hunting, where my parents went hunting. Samuel's parents passed away early in life. So we stayed with our parents wherever they were. When we went, we couldn't take 10 months worth of non-Native food. We lived off the land.

How long did it take you to paddle over there?

We left around August and we would see the first snow falls as we paddled. We would reach where we wanted to be by October. A lot of times we would portage with a lot of snow on the ground. We would keep paddling until it froze up. There were a lot of people who still had to go further than us. Around the river they call Mistsibi at the end of the road. They went almost to the end of Quebec.

They were the ones next to the Innu?

Yes, we used to see the Schefferville people. Near Kuujuaq there used to be a cabin with only a radio about 100 miles from the town. My father used to go there to get supplies. I can just remember it. I was five at the time. It took a while for them to go. They went to get some supplies. They only brought back flour. There was no lard. Crees travelled far using only their legs or their arms for paddling.

Were all the mountains, rivers and lakes named?

Yes, where we were. I know that where we stepped we named the rivers, even the smaller creeks. And the mountains were all named.

Why were they named?

Talk to Samuel, he will tell you.

Okay, Thank you.

Samuel: Watchia.

Watchia.

What do you want to know? What don't you know? (Laughter.)

Everything. I want to learn about everything. I don't know anything.

So now you want to learn? You're thinking more wisely now?

I finally came to my senses. (*More laughter.*) She (Margaret) has told me a little about your hunting area. Where you used to hunt. The Quebec government is talking about naming the mountains, the islands in the reservoir. Tell me a little about your hunting area.

Let me first start by greeting everyone who will read this. She has probably told you about the paddling that we have done to get to our hunting area. We would stop paddling and wait for freeze up. About one month, that would be the longest I would spend time in any one place. When we waited for freeze up. Then we would use our legs when wanted to get around. Two weeks is considered a long time to stay when we used our legs. We searched far for our *money*. When we couldn't find any more we moved on. A lot of times we ate fish. There wasn't much caribou or moose. When my grandfather went hunting he saw caribou. But when my dad was hunting--he lived to be about 40 years old--he didn't see any caribou. When I was 20 years old that was when I saw caribou again.

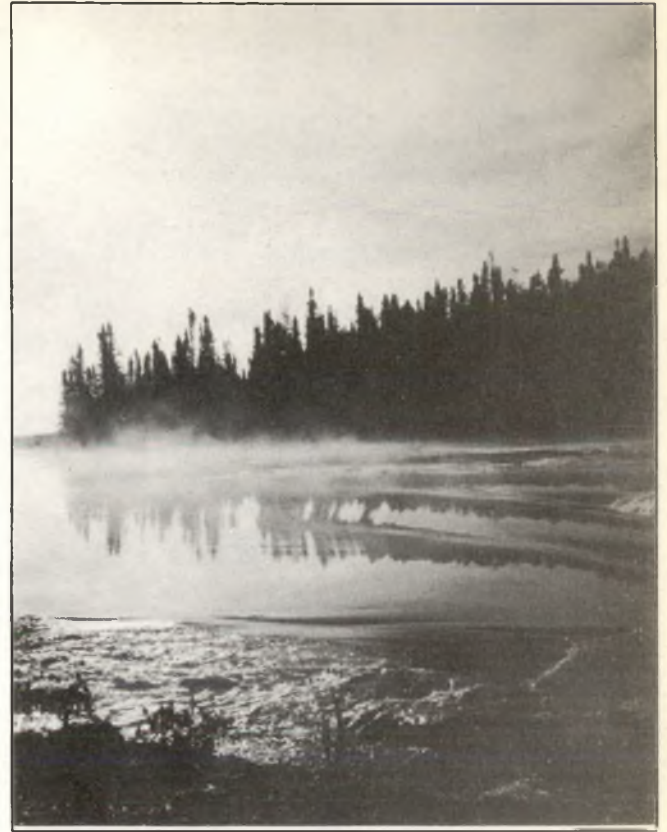
Our generation is the last to exclusively hunt for our living. The

"And the mountains were all named."

later generations are the ones that started working inside to get their living. Since the river has been flooded we can't go hunting any more. Wherever they flooded we can't go hunting. We used to go hunting where they flooded. I can't see where I can go hunting. I hunted all over before the reservoirs flooded the land. When we talk about Chisasibi land there isn't a lot of it. It isn't big. I can't see where I can get *money*. I have seen Whapmagootsui, Wemindji and Mistissini land. And we saw the people to the east. Chisasibi land is very small. The powerlines were very hard on us. We couldn't find our *money* any more. Now we get bills for the power and they haven't discussed the *money* we used to get from the land. We can't get anything from the water. There is no more land. A long time ago I never used to meet up with non-Natives. Then as time went by I met more and more. Then the land was flooded. I didn't like what I saw. When they first started flooding it was during the fall. That is when I pitied it the most when the water kept on rising. The ones who hibernate during the winter were already hibernating. A lot of those that hibernate must have drowned. They killed a lot. That is what I will say, they killed a lot. I didn't like what I saw. All the *money* was gone. Even the water animals were destroyed. A lot of animals drowned.

What about the names of the places? Where do they come from?

However he (Iyiyuu) sees the mountain or the lake, that is how he names it. Those mountains, those are the only things that are showing through the water. One mountain is called Napayaak



Uuchii. It is a male porcupine. One time a group of hunters came across a porcupine at the top of the mountain and they called it Napayaak Uuchii. That is one mountain that has been named...

I am asking you this to help me explain to people who don't understand.

Akuuda. When you ask how they name places, it was how they saw things. A lot of lakes were also named. Iyiyuu used to say where he lived, where he came from. He would say the name of the lake. There is a lake simply called Nimaas Sakhiikan. There were whitefish there. There is another one called Juumshuumnuu Sakhiikan. However, they didn't mention Kuukuumnuu. There is an old man who used to stay there. I guess they called him Juumshuumnuu. There is also Waapuush Sakhiikan, Amisk Sakhiikan. Everything. That is how the ones who named the places named them. The ones who were first there. However one saw something, how the land looked, how the trees were standing. They named them so he could tell the story of where he saw the caribou. They named a lot of lakes and everything within them. The islands were named. There was a big lake called Kaamaamaachiishikmaach. There's a lot of names within that lake. There were a lot of names. When the lakes were still visible.

So the ones who don't understand can be told that the mountains already have names?

Well, when they ask you, you can tell them all the mountains already have names. When the Iyiyuuch first came they already named everything. How they saw things. There are already names for the mountains that are above the water. I would ask the ones who want to change the names not to. Those names have been there for a long time. There were names wherever I stepped.

Up for the Challenge

It's a nice day for a Cree race.

The icy lake is a mirror, the sky blue and the sun burns as the people of Nemaska gather at the shore of Champion Lake. They are here to witness the spectacle of nine Cree men and women swimming, biking, portaging, paddling and finally running a combined total of 279 km through the heart of Cree Territory.

by N. Diamond & R. Crook

Last minute checks are done on mountain bikes and canoes. The racers seem tense except for the one favored to win this race, Redfern Cheezo. He clowns around wearing ridiculous plastic Buddy Holly style glasses and a tight black swimming cap. The people stand by the shore shading themselves under the trees.

The formalities get underway and the contestants are presented. They greet each other ceremonially and troop down to the village dock where they gather in a loose circle for an opening prayer. Then they board the boats and head off to the sandbar where the race is to begin. Only Redfern, still clowning, decides to take the dip and wade over.

A Peacekeeper's siren signals the start. The swimmers take off, but for one, who doesn't move off the starting line. Linda Iserhoff-Cooper is laughing nervously. "I can't!"

"You can do it!" shouts out founder of the event Rodney Hester, from one of the boats. Mumbling under his breath, "No one is quitting on me this year," he strips off his shirt and dives into the chilly water. "I'll do it with you."

The Waswanipi swimmer tells us later she had just learned to swim three months ago.

Redfern is the first out of the water at 18 min. 24 sec. Roderick Petawabano and Louis Mianscum follow. Then Malcolm Tanoush and Stephanie Mianscum.

They mount their bikes and speed down the gravel road leaving town.

More swimmers emerge from the lake. Jimmy Coonishish, Lizzie-Anne. But Linda Iserhoff-Cooper, hanging on to a life jacket, is still struggling, and Jodie House fights leg cramps in the water.

The crowd on the shore worries about him. On his way from Chisasibi, a flat tire kept him up most of the night. But friends assure the crowd that Jodie's not a quitter.

Heads quickly turn to watch the dust fly as the cyclists arrive back in town. Louis Mianscum is still a full kilometre behind Redfern.

One by one, the racers shoulder their canoes to applause from the crowd and begin the 1 km long portage to the end of the dirt road.

On the portage trail a voice crackles over a walkie-talkie, "Someone's in trouble." It's Roderick. A cramp in his shoulder forces him to throw down his canoe. He's tired. He's already played two games at the volleyball tournament this weekend, and has another scheduled for tonight. But he quickly recovers and continues on. Sweat pours from his brow as he nears the shore. Jimmy Coonishish is just metres behind him.

Heading back to the starting line the walkie talkie voice comes on again, "Hey, we just saw Stephanie running through the village." "What? She's running?" Is there a mix-up? we think. But it isn't a mistake. She had already paddled the half km canoe route and is on the final stretch of the shorter women's course. "She's O.K., let her go," they get the answer back.

Meanwhile, Jodie, still swimming, is nearing shore. He touches bottom and walks the final stretch, grabbing at his left leg with a pained expression on his face. He falls and splashes down in the thigh deep water. He forces himself up and touches the beach only to collapse face down. A female voice from the crowd pleads, "Weeij hahgue mai!" Jodie rises and struggles toward his bike. Another female voice wonders out loud where his crew is.

Redfern is first to beach his canoe. He playfully splashes the village kids with his paddle as he passes the dock they're watching from. Louis Mianscum is now just seconds behind.

The heat is on, as the two leaders vie for the title in the last stretch: a 10 km run, which is Louis' forte, and Redfern's biggest challenge.

Back in town, Rodney and the organizers herd the growing crowd to the finish line to cheer on Stephanie, clearly the women's champion. She sprints for the last stretch, amidst the sounds of cheering, honking and whistling. Her time beats last year's champion by 4 minutes at 1:55:56.

Out on the road, Louis is closing up on Redfern. As Louis passes him, Redfern reaches out to hand him a wet towel. They both smile, and Louis takes the lead.

A surprise champion heads home to claim the title at 2:14:26 and break last year's record. The crowd roars. A mere 45 seconds later Redfern crosses the police line shaving over 4 minutes off his own record. Jimmy Coonishish takes a solid third.

Suddenly, the officials scramble to part the crowd. "Jodie's coming! Jodie's coming! Get out of the way."

The unstoppable Jodie screams across the finish line — on his bike. The crowd goes wild. He still has three events to go.

One by one, the racers come in, including Linda, who had come closest to abandoning the challenge. She raises her arms triumphantly above her head as she finishes. Rodney is beaming. No one has quit this year.

But the race is not over.

Three hours later, the crowd has thinned. The sun is low when word comes that Jodie is on his way. As he nears the finish, he picks up speed, and the patient fans cheer the last competitor across the line at 5:23:00. Out of breath, and limping, he can barely speak. Jodie pants only one comment: "I feel like shit."



Women's Champion Stephanie Mianscum:
"The training is harder than the event itself"



Roderick Petawabano emerges ahead of Louis Mianscum early in the race.



Stephanie Mianscum shows off her training.



Jodie House fighting the elements. "Next year, I'll be second last," he joked, later.



Redfern Cheezo. "He has great sportmanship," says his opponent, Louis Mianscum.



Men's Champion, Louis Mianscum shatters John Gunner's 1996 record.



VITALIST



**1. Stephanie
Mianscum**

Age: 29
Height: 5'2"
Weight: 145 lbs
Strongest event: portage/canoe
Weakest event: swimming
Training: "I've been training since the spring, juggling between my family and full-time work at the CSB. I never trained for mid-day running, and the heat out there during the run really got to me. I wished I was in the water!"



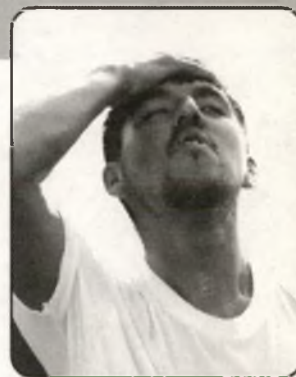
**2. Lizzie-Anne
Mettaweskum**

Age: 29
Height: 5'2"
Weight: 146 lbs
Strongest event: bicycle
Weakest event: portage
Training: "I did a lot of jogging... and watching TV!"



**3. Linda
Iserhoff-Cooper**

Age: 27
Height: 5'6"
Weight: 168 lbs
Strongest event: canoeing
Weakest event: swimming
Training: "I trained everyday until June. Then I walked 3 or 4 days a week. I didn't have anywhere to swim."



**1. Louis
Mianscum**

Age: 24
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 202 lbs
 (lost 40 lbs since May)
Strongest event: running
Weakest event: paddling
Training: "I focused mostly on running, every morning and evening. I did sprints and endurance runs, and I also went farther than 10 km so that 10 would be easier. I got those tips from Wally Rabbitskin."

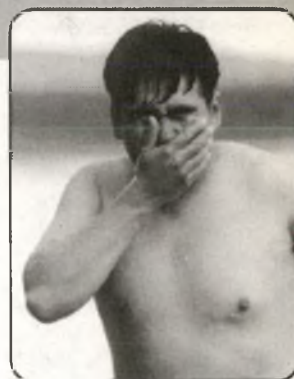


**2. Rec
Che**

Age: (lost 40 lb)
Height:
Weight:
Strongest event:
Weakest event:
Training: "I trained months, jogging and (as a carpenter) kept too. It's good exerc"



A T I S T I C S



Fernando

Age: 32
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 154 lbs
Strongest event: swimming/
running
Weakest event: portage
Training: After goosebreak, I had a problem with my knee, so I had to take it easy. I did swim across the lake, whenever I had someone to go with me. Sometimes, I also biked 18 km to work.

3. Malcolm Tanoush

Age: 32
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 154 lbs
Strongest event: swimming/
running
Weakest event: portage
Training: After goosebreak, I had a problem with my knee, so I had to take it easy. I did swim across the lake, whenever I had someone to go with me. Sometimes, I also biked 18 km to work.

4. Jimmy Coonishish

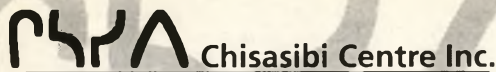
Age: 27
Height: 5'6"
Weight: 183 lbs
Strongest event: all of them.
Weakest event: swimming
Training: "I trained for 3 months everyday."

5. Roderick Petawabano

Age: 26
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 225 lbs
Strongest event: swimming
Weakest event: nothing
Training: "I focused on aerobics, but for the last month I've been on the Volleyball committee (for this weekend's tournament) and I couldn't train. No more committees!"

6. Jodie House

Age: N/A
Height: N/A
Weight: N/A
Strongest event: N/A
Weakest event: N/A
Training: No comment!



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Who would you like to see compete in the Nemaska Fitness Challenge next year?



"John Boudrias!"

—Angela House



"Nebabam, Peter and Andrew Coonishish.
They're both strong men."

—Charlene Wapachee



"Someone from Waskaganish."

—Lindy Moar



"Me. It depends on my knee."

—George Swallow



"Billy Diamond!"

—Lillian Diamond



"Every community."

—Oliver Jolly

EEYOU ESTCHEE AND EEYOU NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

This resolution was adopted at the 23rd Annual General Assembly of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Estchee)/20th Annual General Assembly of the Cree Regional Authority.

The resolution would be the basis of a new relationship with Canada and Quebec.

WHEREAS the members of the Cree Nation Youth Council adopted its Resolution No. 1997-06 regarding the development of Cree National Government;

WHEREAS the Eeyou Estchee Legislature adopted its Declaration of Principles regarding a Cree National Government based on the report of the Cree Eeyou Estchee Commission;

RESOLVED:

THAT the Cree Nation assembly 1997 does hereby call for the development of the Cree National Government to have jurisdiction over Eeyou Estchee as determined by Eeyou;

THAT the GCCEE/CRA be and are hereby mandated to immediately initiate actions to develop the Cree National Government taking into account all past, present and future, will aspirations and determination of Eeyou;

THAT such actions directly involve the Eeyou through local-based and Cree National processes, including but not limited to the immediate implementation of the Cree Nation resolution no. 1996-09, as well as the organization of a forum open to Eeyou in general to discuss and deliberate upon the issue of Eeyou Estchee and Eeyou National Government;

THAT the said Nation restructuring process shall lead to a final Declaration by the Cree Nation of Eeyou Estchee, asserting and reaffirming rights, jurisdiction and total control over Eeyou Estchee;

THAT the said Declaration shall be made to the Great Creator in cognizance and acknowledgement of our understanding of who we are as a people, our relationship to the land, including the water and other resources, our understanding of the meaning and purpose of our existence, and how we can be useful to the rest of the world;

THAT the official text of the said Declaration shall be in Cree, to affirm the sacredness of our identity as a people being of a distinct race with a distinct language, culture and a way of life;

THAT the substance of the said Declaration shall set out the basis of the Cree National Government structure, the Cree Constitution and the laws of the Eeyou Nation;

THAT the implementation schedule and full execution of this resolution be not dictated and/or influenced by any external forces at any time;

THAT the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Estchee) and the Cree Regional Authority pursue and secure funding from appropriate sources to facilitate the carrying out of this resolution;

THAT the Grand Chief and/or Deputy-Grand Chief be and are hereby mandated to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution within a year from now.

PROPOSED BY: MATTHEW MUKASH
SECONDDED BY: IRENE HOUSE
RESOLUTION No. 1997-25



Grand Council of the Crees (of Quebec)
Grand Conseil des Cris (du Québec)

CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATION REGIONALE CRIE

Paid advertisement



Me and Mr. Jones

By Erland S. Campbell

Growing up in Northern Manitoba in the early 60's, my Dad was and still is a big country music fan. Of course, I listened to the great country stars of that time, Hank Williams Sr., Johnny Cash, Hank Snow, and of course, George Jones. I can remember one album cover of a young George Jones. He had a crew-cut, holding his guitar, wearing a bright red suit jacket laden with studs and rhinestones shaped into a guitar. My Dad would play these records until they were buried deep into my mind. This period of my life made me a big country fan as well.

Sometimes life gives you a treat. This treat started with a phone call. Having dinner with a friend, I decided to check my messages. My good friend, Neil "Mr. Skinner" Diamond, of *The Nation*, left me a message asking if I wanted to go and see George "The Living Legend" Jones in Kahnawake. I promptly called him and gave him an enthusiastic "yes!" I had no idea on that particular day I would be attending a George Jones concert. On the other hand, the reason why Neil called me was because Will Nicholls did not want to attend, and he just used me because I have a car and he needed a lift, what do you think?

Arriving at the Kahnawake Sports Complex, about 20 minutes late, we entered the arena without even being asked for our tickets!, I suppose because the concert was already in full country-swing. Being with someone who was part of the press has its perks. It got us a front row seat!

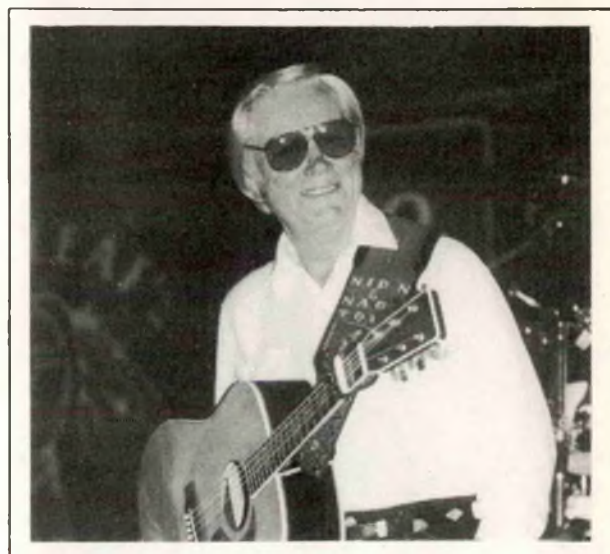
So there he was, bigger than life, Mr. "No-Show" Jones, looking healthy, and sounding great! His silver hair neatly combed, the ever-present dark glasses and backed by a tight, energetic, 7-piece band. My foot began to tap uncontrollably while Neil, armed with two cameras, began to click away furiously.

Sitting beside me were Joseph and Amelia McGregor, residents of Kahnawake and big fans of George Jones, who I wish to thank for assisting me in identifying songs I was unfamiliar with. When Neil and I arrived, "A Picture Of Me Without You" was being played. George, known for his honky-tonk drinking songs and hurtin' love songs, sang out "I'll Give You Something To Drink About," "Who's Gonna Fill Your Shoes?", "He Stopped Loving Her Today," and a medley including such hits as "I'll Share My World With You," "Window Up Above," "Now She's Gone Forever," "Walk Through This World With Me," "White Lightning," and the incomparable, "She Thinks I Still Care."

The enthusiastic crowd got off their seats to the lively "I Don't Need No Rockin' Chair." The crowd was a mix of Northern Crees, Mohawks of Kahnawake and all kinds of country fans. They were all clapping, smiling and thoroughly enjoying the presence of a true country legend. Cameras were flashing from every corner of the arena to capture the moment. Little kids were roaming around with their cute cowboy hats and boots.

Mr. Jones' amazing fiddler, Jim, belted out "Fire On The Mountain," "Sally Gooden," and a Bill Monroe tribute in a song called "Mr. Mun," which is a song about water. The rest of George's band were young men who looked like they were having a good time, funnin' with George, singing back-up vocals, dancing and flicking picks to the audience. Neil and I managed to snag one each.

Throughout the show, Mr. Jones would take time to talk to the audience about his wife, telling jokes or things that happened to him. He's a genuinely personable and friendly man, who impressed everyone with his down-home country charm. He mentioned how



he put his wife through a hard time when he was going through his rough times, and how he's going to put her through some more, jokingly. He introduced her as she was sitting by the stage. He is certainly proud of her and her strength to have put up with him during his party days, which he stopped doing about 11 or 12 years ago, and it shows. He's back on top of his game. His new album, *I Lived To Tell It All*, is an album with new songs and is also the title of his autobiography, which hit #6 on *The New York Times* bestseller list.

Tid-bits about the man: Some of the things I managed to put down during his chats between songs are, his favorite country-singer of all time is Hank Williams Sr. (mine too), along with Lefty Ferrel, Ernest Tubbs and Merle Haggard, whose "The Way That I Am" George sang as a dedication to Merle. Mr. Jones also mentioned that he's not too fond of today's country artists. He's strictly a traditionalist.

His answer to rock-n-roll, he said, was himself "doing an imitation of Roy Acuff imitating Buck Owens imitating Little Richard." Can you picture it? George then launched into a rockin' performance of "Tutti Frutti." He was shakin' all over. Wop-bop-a-loo-bop-a-lop-bam-BOOM!

After the concert, which lasted about an hour-and-a-half, I homed in on the lead guitarist, DeWayne Phillips, who was signing autographs. George had unfortunately left the building immediately following the concert. I asked some questions on various topics. Here are the results. George is 66 years old, born on September 12, 1930 in Franklin, Tennessee. His favorite food is beans and cornbread, he's an early riser, he mows his grass every day when he's at home, he's down-to-earth, has (from what DeWayne remembers) four kids, and his favorite T.V. show is *Matlock*. On the tour-bus, they tune into the *Sony Play Station*, watch movies, and play cards. What else can one do on a bus, eh?

All in all, the evening of Aug. 24, 1997 will be on my top 10 concert list, and get this!, Mr. George Jones will be back next year on July 25!, so you have plenty of time to shine up your cowboy boots! I again would like to thank Neil "Crack-Shot" Diamond of *The Nation* for inviting me to this memorable night of *real country music!!!*

YOUR HOROSCOPE

Pisces (Feb 19-March 20) You probably misread an important situation this year and events will force you to re-examine your own actions. Love affairs should become a commitment or time to hit the road, Jack/Jill. It's forgive or forget time. Double up on exercise; you need it.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) It's turmoil and drama month. No fear, help is on the way. Adjustments are a requirement in order to reach new plateau in relationship. This is not a time of loss but reorganization. Be realistic and move away from people and situations that are road blocks to happiness.

pushing you towards a place where no angels dare to go. It's OK! No one has anything over you anymore, so get back to the business of running your life. They can't prove anything. Stand tall in a new pair of steel-toe boots. Kick butt big time!

Leo (July 23-Aug 22) Your relationship is boring. It needs to be restructured. Surprising behavior in mate will open your eyes to what they are really about. Finances are not so good. Don't hesitate to ask for help when money gets tight. You have good judgment; don't let people tell you otherwise.

Virgo (Aug 23-Sept 22) Your ability to see through the nonsense will leave you feeling frustrated about life. This is not the time for regrets. Financial picture looks good. Renovations in both heart and home will have to be handled with lots of TLC. Sneak a peek before committing to anything.


port and you'll come through as always. If you are going to colour your own hair carefully read the back of the box first. It's going to be a blah, blah month, what can we say?

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21) You could do things you will definitely regret this month. The choice, as always, is yours alone. Don't rush into making commitments or ultimatums in your relationship. Pick up that over-turned furniture, soothe hurt feelings and make nice with that loved one. Then go out and get a much deserved massage!

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 21) Pray to God you win the lottery because your financial outlook is in the toilet this month. For once put trust in someone who knows more than you. Stay focused and ignore the power struggles around you. If you have the opportunity to move, pack your bags and do it.

Capricorn (Dec 22-Jan 19) By the end of the month you will feel as though you have experienced every emotion possible. Your agenda is crammed with invitations; try not to overdo it. Love is seldom easy but is worth the effort. Wardrobe is due for a major change. Go on a shopping spree.

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BETWEEN FRIENDS (with Deantha Edmunds)

What's hot and what's not in women's hairstyles today? I spoke with several stylists at different downtown Montreal salons to find out ...

Continental Coiffeurs Elle et Lui - Alexis Nihon

\$28 - shampoo, cut and blowdry

OUT: long frizzy permed hair

IN: short straight hair, the new Rachel look

NOTE: For dry, permed or coloured hair, do a deep conditioning treatment twice a week. How often should you trim? Short hair: every six weeks Long hair: every two months.

St. Laurent Coiffure Inc. - Promenades de la Cathedrale

\$45 - shampoo, cut and blowdry

OUT: thick wide streaks of blond, super short, razor-cut hair long over the ears, last year's Rachel look

IN: two-tone highlights that create dimensional effects, shoulder-length shags with layers, softer geometric shapes, bobs that are feathered and layered to give more feminine style, side parts

NOTE: Curls are back! This year from London: corkscrew curls, shoulder-length spirals with bangs and fringes, short tight curls to frame the face.

All of the hairdressers I spoke to recommended using only salon products, but for those of us who can't afford the 15-20 bucks for a small bottle of specialty shampoo, try Neutrogena. Be sure to check the PH level of any shampoo you use. It should be 7. Anything higher is too harsh. Also, 2-in-1 products are bad for your hair, especially Pantene for permed dry hair. It feels like it's healthy for your hair, but it actually leaves a huge wax build-up on your



hair, which prevents your other styling products (gel, mousse, spray) from working. They just add another coat on top of the shampoo buildup.

It is very important to find a hairstylist you can trust. He or she can tell you what styles will best suit your face shape and personality. For example, if you are a very active person, go for a sporty cut that doesn't demand a lot of styling and maintenance. Short people with short necks should wear their hair short, but if you want to keep the length, get it feathered to eliminate weight and add volume. Do what's best for your natural hair. If you have straight hair, don't try to change it--keep it straight and get a cut that suits the shape of your face. Bring out the best in you!



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**LIQUIDATION SALE
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The Healing Gathering

By Marilyn Bearskin

This issue is about "The Healing Gathering" that was held in Waswanipi on July 29, 30, 31. I'm not too good at writing about conferences, because I don't write down notes, but only listen. But I will tell you about what I observed and learned.

The Gathering was done the traditional way, down by the river. The workshops were done in mitchuaps and canvas covered tents. Many issues were talked about.

Workshops, a play, and a comedy skit about alcohol and drugs were done by Don Burnstick (a.k.a. Mr Alcohol). He was really good, an eye-opener. If he hasn't come to your community yet, he's one I recommend you invite.

Other workshops included Gambling, Justice, Fitness and Health, Coping in a Relationship, Residential Schools to name a few.

It is hard work and very intense in these workshops, but afterwards there was time for laughter and fun also. In the evenings there was talent shows, lipsyncing and little plays. There were many talented people such as Robert Bobbish, the Cooper Brothers and others. Everyone had fun together.

I couldn't attend all the workshops, because I was asked to speak on a panel about Domestic Violence along with three other people, who spoke about other issues. I was honoured to be invited and hoped I could contribute to Cree Society in some way by speaking about the seriousness of Domestic Violence.

I kind of felt nervous at the beginning, and what I wanted to say did not, at first, come out the way I had planned. But as I spoke a little more, I started feeling comfortable and I just went with the flow. I personally feel speaking about Domestic Violence in front of people makes a difference in helping others, because I can get some feedback from the listeners. When I write about it, people read the articles, but can't voice what they think. One of several reasons is that they may not be able to communicate in English, and I write the articles in English. This is one thing I learned at the conference.

One woman who was in her 50s, spoke out at the Conference. She told her story of the physical abuse she faced with her husband, who is now deceased. She still felt the pain as if it were just yesterday. Her children's tears fell along with her tears, while she told her story and the pain she expressed while she was telling her story was heart-rendering. She had kept this part of her life inside of her for a long time (years).

After when I hugged her, I could feel her warmth and her strength and I couldn't help my tears from falling, feeling sympathetic towards her. But sympathy is not what I should have been feeling, but rather, I should have felt proud that she was finally releasing her pain and proud that she survived the abuse.

Some of the older generation of women and elders still carry the pain of the abuse they suffered. Carrying that kind of secret for so many years causes a lot of pain. I could see that with this woman.


I hope this woman I am writing about, we'll call her Phyllis, is a

good example for the younger generations. Abuse causes severe pain to your inner-self. Abuse is something to be taken seriously and when you speak about it, you will start you on the path to happiness. To our friend Phyllis, you are a strong woman and I am proud that you had the courage to speak out and I wish you everlasting peace and happiness as you walk your journey of life.


"As I spoke a little more, I started feeling comfortable and I just went with the flow."



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During the conference, another woman approached me about her son being in an abusive relationship, but I was speechless. I couldn't relate to her son's feelings, because I write about the feelings of a woman in an abusive relationship.

What I do know is that when men get physically and emotionally abused by their wives, they tend to just laugh about it. They are too ashamed and too proud to take it seriously. I don't know enough to respond to this woman's question about her son. Is there anyone out there who can help her? Her question was, "What do you say to a man who is physically abused and does not want to leave the relationship?"

Last but not least, I would like to thank Bertha Dixon and the organizing committee for the conference in your community of Waswanipi. Conferences like this do make a difference in leading your people to their healing journeys, not necessarily through native Spirituality, but by helping your people to find peace within themselves. It allows people to voice themselves which is part of healing and it shows people that it is all right to speak. Our people need guidance and you are true leaders in the helping field. Meegwetch.

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Map of downtown Chibougamau showing various businesses and landmarks. The map includes a grid with labels for 'Boul. Hamel', '3e Rue', and 'Transport Daguelac'. Other labels include 'Motel La Président', 'Hélicoptère Viking', 'Fibre de Verre Ungava', 'Les Résidence B.F.', 'WE ARE HERE!', and 'Ministère Faune'. A logo for 'interapis n°1 decor' is also present.

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100-BIRTHS!!!

I would like to congratulate these ladies, Rita mark-Stewart and iris Crow on the birth of their sons. Iris on June 9, Rita on June 10. Congratulations Iris. You said you wanted a boy. I miss you gals. I miss the walks we took downtown. Good luck to you both. Happy 4th birthday to Thomas Longchap on August 20 and good luck on your first school year. Also to Teddy Longchap happy 3rd birthday on September 15. I know it's early

101-B-DAYS!!!

Don't ever stop dreaming your dreams, don't ever try to understand everything, some things will never just make sense. Don't ever be reluctant to show your feelings, when you're happy give into it. when you're not, live with it. Don't ever be afraid to try to make things better, you might be surprised at the results. Don't ever take the world on your shoulders. Don't ever feel threatened by the future. Take life one day at a time. Don't ever feel guilty about the past, what's done is done. Learn from any mistakes you might have made. Don't ever feel alone there is always some one there for you to reach out to. Don't ever forget that you can achieve so many of the things you can imagine, imagine that! It's not as hard as it seems. Don't ever stop loving. Don't ever stop believing. Don't ever stop dreaming your dreams. Happy birthday to my dear friend, Annie Karen Snowboy on August 20, 1997 and many more wonderful years to come. LOVE IN FRIENDSHIP

Kitchen on August 19, 97. We wish your days will be special as you are and the memories of yesterday and for the happiness of today on 'your birthday,. We miss you a lot. Hope we can see you 'soon. P.S. Don't' eat too much cake. Ha ha ha. Just kidding. have a great time. With lots of hugs and kisses. xoxoxoxoxoxox Gordon, Minnie and the girls.



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Happy birthday to our one and only daughter Kerriane. She'll be celebrating her 12th birthday on September 11, 1997. Hope your dreams and wishes come true. With lots of love, mom and dad.

I heard already, mr. hot. Sept 17, and you're gonna be 34. Keep the list coming anyway, you might get lucky. SWG.

We would like to wish a happy birthday to Phyllis on September two, 1997 to Greg on September 13, 1997. Have a great day on your birthdays. From Larry and Delores.

A belated birthday wish going out to my lovely mother, daisy Jane Mark Blacksmith on August 10, 1997. Happy birthday Mom, I'm so sorry I didn't get you anything but you'll always have my love. Mom, I want everyone to know that I love you so much and you mean the world to me and there's not a day that goes by that I don't think of you. Because you're my only true friend I've got in this world, because you understand my feelings and you lend me a hand when I need one. And, mom, thank you for taking good care of me from the last 18 years. P.S. I love you!!! and happy birthday!!!! From daughter Pamela Cappissisit. xoxoxoxoxoxoxox

I just want to tell my husband Stanley S. Gunner a happy birthday on September 10, 1997 and I love you with all my heart and soul. Whenever I am lonely I am here with you. Whenever you are sad and having a hard time, I am here to share your feelings. Whenever you fall down I am here to catch you. Whenever you are cold I am here to warm you up. Whenever you need love I AM HERE TO SHARE MY heart with you. Whenever you need me I am here with you. Always truly ...and wishing you a happy birthday. Thanks for everything you have

done for our children. Without you we would be nothing. Thanks again. Love always, Winnie.

Birthday greeting to my uncle David W. on September 13 from Waskaganish and also to my dad on September 22, Gilbert M. Happy birthday to you both and with love. Hope you both have good ones. With all my love, Caitlin Nancy Whiskeychan. Waskaganish.

Happy birthday TO JOEL WABUN GUNNER on September 4th. We love you very much and hope you will come and visit us soon. From Louise Brandon and Allison. P.S. Don't forget we love you. xoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxoxox.

Happy birthday to Jason Mianscum on September 9th. Hope all your wishes and dreams come true. You're very special to me and I will always be there for you. With love, hugs and kisses. From me, 301, 1 street.

Happy 2nd birthday to a sweet and beautiful girl Juanita Bearskin (August 14) We think of you everyday, you'll always be in our hearts and thoughts. We love you and we miss your kisses. Love always, Gordon, Edith and Evander Gunner (Mistissini).

Happy birthday to my cuz Bertie Shecapio on August 20th (Waskaganish or should I say North bay!) I hope you don't party too much and by the way good luck in college and don't give up!! I repeat, don't give up. Happy birthday again and take care of your self wherever you may be when you read this! From D. Blueboy.

I would like to personally wish Johnny P. Trapper a happy 23rd birthday on August 27th. I'm glad my brother said, "It's up to you." because I wouldn't have never met you in the first place! Anyway I hope you have a good time on your very on special day

CLASSIFIEDS

and I wish you the very best in whatever you do. From Diane.

Sending special birthday wishes to Michael Wesley on September 10th and Tina Wesley on September 12th who are celebrating their 22nd birthday. May all your dreams come true. With love and miss you both. Emily Wesley. xox. P.S. Saying hi to my family in Moosonee and MF. Miss you guys. xox.

102-WEDDINGS!!!

Congratulations to our friend Charlotte Tapiatic and Glen wash who got married on August 15, 1997. We wish you the very best in the years ahead. Friends always, Sally, Marlene, Pauline and Sharon.

Congratulations and best wishes to JR and Orenda Petawaabno on their wedding day on August 29, 97. Orenda you were a beautiful bride and JR you looked cool! but a little cubby. Ha! Just kidding. We love you both and wish you all the best. From John and Paula Matt.

Congrats to my friend Charlotte and his husband Glen on their marriage on August 15. Your wedding day was so beautiful. Suzanne was so cute with that dress even when she was on the dance floor dancing alone. I wish all the happiness for the three of you. From your friend always, April. Oh, Glen, stop flirting with my mom, your married now. Ha! Ha! Once again, congratulations.

103-ANNIVERSARIES!!!

We would like to wish these couples a happy anniversaries: Ricky and Tammy Coon (September 6, 97) Leonard and Caroline Mattawashish (September 28, 97) Clifford and Bella Loon (August 17, 97) John and Laurie Brien September 8) and God bless you all. We love you all. From John and Paula Matt.

A belated happy 1st anniversary going out to two special couples, Robie and Minnie Pet on June 28 and also to Samuel and Linda on July 19. Wishing you all the best and many many more !!!! With love, Stephanie M.

A special couple will be celebrating their 8th anniversary on September 1st. This goes out to Robert and Mary Baribeau... You guys are very special and we wish you all the best that life can offer! Love, Steph.

I would like to wish my husband John P. Matt a happy 15th anniversary on September 10, 1997. I just want to tell you how much ILY and I thank God for all the children we have, especially our baby Terrence. Once again, we love you, John. From wife Paula and your 5 children.

This one goes out to the one I love very much and I miss you very much. I'm very sorry plans didn't work out right. This one goes out to Gordie from Moosonee, Ontario. I wish you were her with me, I know that someday you. I will never forget you. I can't stop thinking about you. Well, I'll let you go for now. I just wanted to let you know that I thought about you everyday. With lots of love and kisses from your babe, you know me Joker. P.S., ILY and IMY.

300-PERSONALS

Stella Lameboy, you know, at Concordia University, you know, good luck this year, you know. Hope you get to share a class with, you know. Change is good, you know. You know, Bryan Adams, you know? He's gonna be in Montreal. You know and we're there, you know. We need a place to crash, you know, how about your place, you know. Let me know, you know! From you know, you know?

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